



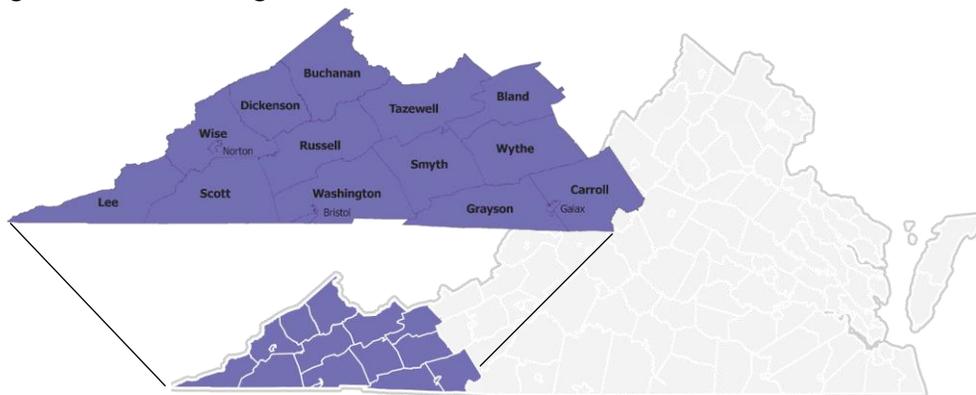
## GO Virginia Region 1 Annual Report FY 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022)

### I. INTRODUCTION

The GO Virginia Region 1 Annual Report is designed to provide a comprehensive detail of the Region 1 Council’s activity throughout Fiscal Year 2022. This report contains metrics projects, pipeline activity, and collaborative partnership analysis of Region 1.

GO Virginia Region 1 is located in the most southwest corner of the Commonwealth, is mainly rural, and has historically had the weakest economic growth of all of the GO Virginia regions in the state. The Appalachian Mountains run through many of the 13 counties and three cities that comprise the region; this includes Counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise, Wythe, and the Cities of Bristol, Galax, and Norton.

The beauty and rural amenities of the region also bring the challenges of a sparsely populated area and mountains that can present navigated difficulties to residents seeking jobs. The natural resources of the mountains have historically made coal mining one of the highest-paying industries in the region.



Each GO Virginia Region has a support organization that provides administrative support to applicants and subgrantees. The support organization for GO Virginia Region 1 is The University of Virginia’s College at Wise (UVA Wise), located in Wise, Virginia. The Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) serves as the statewide support organization for the GO Virginia program.

The 2021 Growth and Diversification Plan for Southwest Virginia seeks to provide an honest look at the region’s opportunities and challenges, offering a realistic view of the region. This plan has identified four target sectors and three target strategies to be able to capitalize on true opportunities.

Target Sectors
Advanced Manufacturing
Agriculture and Food & Beverage Manufacturing
Energy & Minerals
Information & Emerging Technology

Target Strategies
Innovation & Scale Up Support
Sites & Infrastructure
Talent Development

**II. GROWTH & DIVERSIFICATION PLAN**

The GO Virginia Region 1 Growth and Diversification Plan identifies and prioritizes economic opportunities, needs, and challenges facing the region and is designed to assist the regional council in evaluating which potential projects best address the identified priorities. This plan outlines needed enhancements where GO Virginia grant funds may support collaborative programs between at least two or more localities that will lead to the creation of higher-paying jobs. With this plan guiding the regional council’s work to develop talent pipeline, grow existing businesses, encourage entrepreneurial activity, and advance joint site and infrastructure development, there has been significant capital investment in Region 1.

**III. SUMMARY OF PROJECTS**

During Fiscal Year 2022, nine projects were advanced to the GO Virginia State Board. The total GO Virginia funding request for these projects is \$1,661,305.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Appalachian Sustainable Development’s Mobilizing the Supply Chain with Critical Infrastructure	\$212,200	\$51,624	\$55,000	-

**Appalachian Sustainable Development’s Mobilizing the Supply Chain with Critical Infrastructure** project is part of a three-phased initiative focused on closing gaps in local supply chain and expanding the capacity of agricultural small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs. GO Virginia will support Phase 2 of these efforts, which involved acquiring infrastructure and equipment needed for institutional value-added production and packaging. ASD will launch infrastructure expansions for local producers developing new value-added products and packaging for the market or preserving their harvests. Localities participating in the project include City of Bristol and Scott County. Core outcomes of the project include ten businesses expanded, four businesses created, 15 credentials awarded, 30 jobs created by year five, \$250,000 revenues increased from export-sales, and three new products completed or released to production.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission's Regional Housing Study	\$20,000	\$10,000	-	\$191,000

**Mount Rogers Planning District Commission's Regional Housing Study** was going to develop a regional housing study that would further inform localities and potential developers of the types and prices of housing that are most needed in the community. The expected deliverable was a comprehensive regional study that identifies the current and future housing needs in each locality involved by analyzing the housing market and population trends. Participating localities on this project include the City of Galax, City of Bristol, Bland County, Carroll County, Grayson County, Smyth County, Washington County, and Wythe County. This project was approved by the Region 1 Council and moved to the GO Virginia State Board, but did not receive final approval.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
InvestSWVA's Project Veer	\$49,750	-	\$24,875	\$17,875

**InvestSWVA's Project Veer** will engage wind energy industry experts to perform a market analysis for Region 1's manufacturers to participate in the onshore and offshore wind supply chain. There is an opportunity for local companies to enter this market and for the region to create workforce to support the industry. A market analysis will be delivered and will serve as an economic development roadmap to assist the region in understanding the supply chain for renewable energy, where the gaps are, and how to close those gaps. Localities participating in the project include the City of Bristol, Wise County, and Washington County.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Smyth County Economic Development Authorities' Pathway Park Infrastructure Improvements	\$600,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$600,000

**Smyth County Economic Development Authorities' Pathway Park Infrastructure Improvements** will advance the site readiness of Pathway Park and leverage the newly created Pathway Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (RIFA). Located south of US Route 11 in the Town of Chilhowie and adjacent to Interstate 81, Pathway Park is a Virginia Business Ready Sites Program Tier IV site. The project's goal is to implement infrastructure improvements to

the site in order to spark interest in the property, increase competitiveness in the state and region, and be prepared for industry to locate to Smyth County. Localities joining the Pathway RIFA include the counties of Smyth, Bland, and Washington. Upon completion, this project will have a completion of 2,000-foot water main, completion of a 1,600-foot sanitary sewer line, and a formation of the Pathway RIFA.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Mountain Empire Community College's Project Workforce Education & Life Development (WELD)	\$101,025	-	\$50,730	-

**Mountain Empire Community College's Project Workforce Education & Life Development (Project WELD)** will assist regional employers with filling open positions, particularly in high-demand, highly skilled occupations, that have proven to be difficult for regional manufacturers due to the impacts of the Coronavirus pandemic and changing workforce dynamics. This project will tap into an underutilized labor force, those individuals with a history of incarceration. Individuals will be trained while incarcerated and link them to employment opportunities upon release. Localities participating in the project include the counties of Buchanan, Dickenson, Lee, Scotty, and Wise and the City of Norton. Anticipated outcomes include 65 students trained in six cohorts, 52 program completers, 42 industry credentials earned, and 35 completers achieving gainful employment.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
The Virginia College Fund's Gupton Initiative	\$100,000 (\$10,000 Region 1)	-	\$59,000	-

**The Virginia College Fund's Gupton Initiative** will launch and demonstrate the sustainability of a career pathways partnership with Virginia Commonwealth Universities' College of Engineering to create a pipeline of internship opportunities for students of the Virginia College Fund, now Commonwealth Alliance for Rural Colleges, member institutions in the advanced pharmaceutical manufacturing cluster in central Virginia, and to further validate the potential for employment in advanced manufacturing sectors across the Commonwealth, most specifically in rural regions. The specific outcome of the project is a roadmap for ensuring that a first cohort of students from VCF member institutions enrolls in the VCU Medicines for All Institute in the fall of 2022. Region 3 is the lead region for the project, with Regions 1, 2, and 8 serving as partner regions.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Carroll County Public School's GO TEC Region 1	\$308,924	\$24,462	\$130,000	\$227,301

**Carroll County Public School's GO TEC Region 1** is a talent pipeline module that has seen great success in GO Virginia Region 3. Carroll County Public Schools will pilot GO TEC Career Connection Labs at Carroll County Middle School, Grayson County Middle School, and two middle schools at Wythe County Public Schools. These labs will develop a pipeline of talent to support industry targets. Students will be exposed to career pathways in target industries at the middle school level, expanding to dual enrollment through community college(s), moving to industry credentialing and the college or career training programs eventually leading to employment in industry targets. This project will train 525 students in GO TEC Career Connection Labs per calendar year. After full implementation, the project will award 175 credentials after completion of GO TEC career exploration and high school courses, enroll 50 students in internships/apprenticeships, implement two new career pathways at each school division leading to post-secondary career pathways, and establish ten agreement with businesses to provide internships and apprenticeship for students.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
United Way of Southwest Virginia's Employer Sponsored Childcare Benefit	\$269,406	-	\$400,000	\$30,000

**United Way of Southwest Virginia's Employer Sponsored Childcare Benefit** will develop the Employer Sponsored Childcare Benefit program focused on the advanced manufacturing industry. The project will allow employees who left the workforce due to the pandemic to be able to return to or join the workforce. The proposed program involves a public-private partnership to assist advanced manufacturers fill open positions and retain workers in current positions by offering employees a competitive childcare fringe benefit, which also helps meet a major barrier to employment or parents. There will be 29 businesses served; 25 of these businesses will participate on committee or engage in project activities and four businesses will participate directly in the employer-sponsored childcare benefit program. There will also be 76 jobs filled or retained as a result of this program.

Project	GO VA Funds	Locality Match	Non-Locality Match	Other Leverage
Mount Rogers Regional Partnership's Make it Here	\$90,000	\$45,000	-	\$514,000

**Mount Rogers Regional Partnership's Make it Here** will provide staffing and resources to begin retaining and attracting talent within the region (K12 and Community College system). The project will focus on the expansion of education and training opportunities that lead directly to occupations in the primary target industries of manufacturing; while healthcare is not a target industry, but a key component to the overall health of Region 1, this project will also lead to opportunities in the healthcare sector. Partner localities include the counties of Smyth, Wythe, Bland, Grayson, Carroll, and the City of Galax. This project will deliver a comprehensive Talent Retention Plan.

#### **IV. REGIONAL COLLABORATION & PARTNER SUPPORT**

GO Virginia Region 1 staff continues to coordinate and facilitate quarterly working group meetings; these meeting include participants from the public and private sector in advanced manufacturing, energy and minerals, and information technology.

Staff also participates regularly in the Southwest Virginia Energy Research and Development Authority meetings, Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority meetings, Cumberland Industrial Facilities Authority meetings, and additional roundtable discussions and community forums.

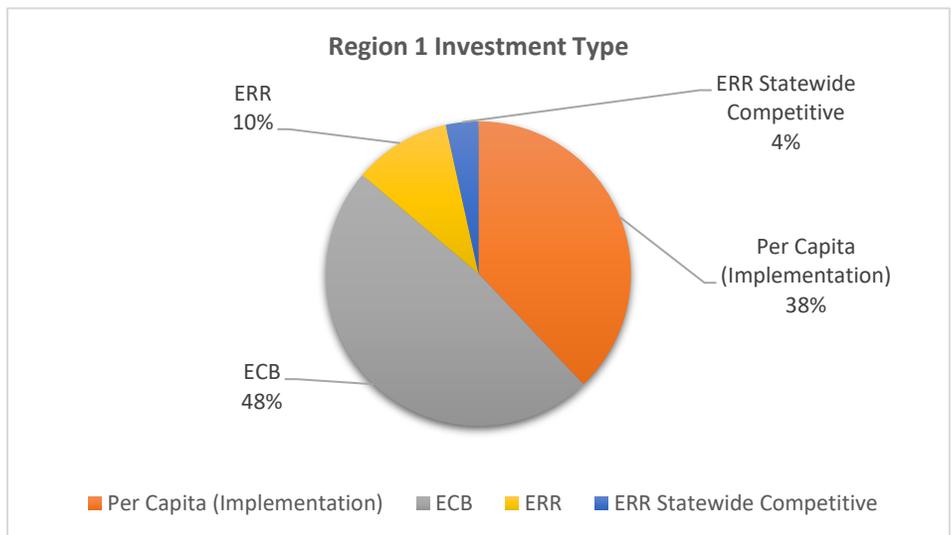
In Fiscal Year 2022 partnerships that have led to GO Virginia projects or activities for Region 1 includes, but is not limited to:

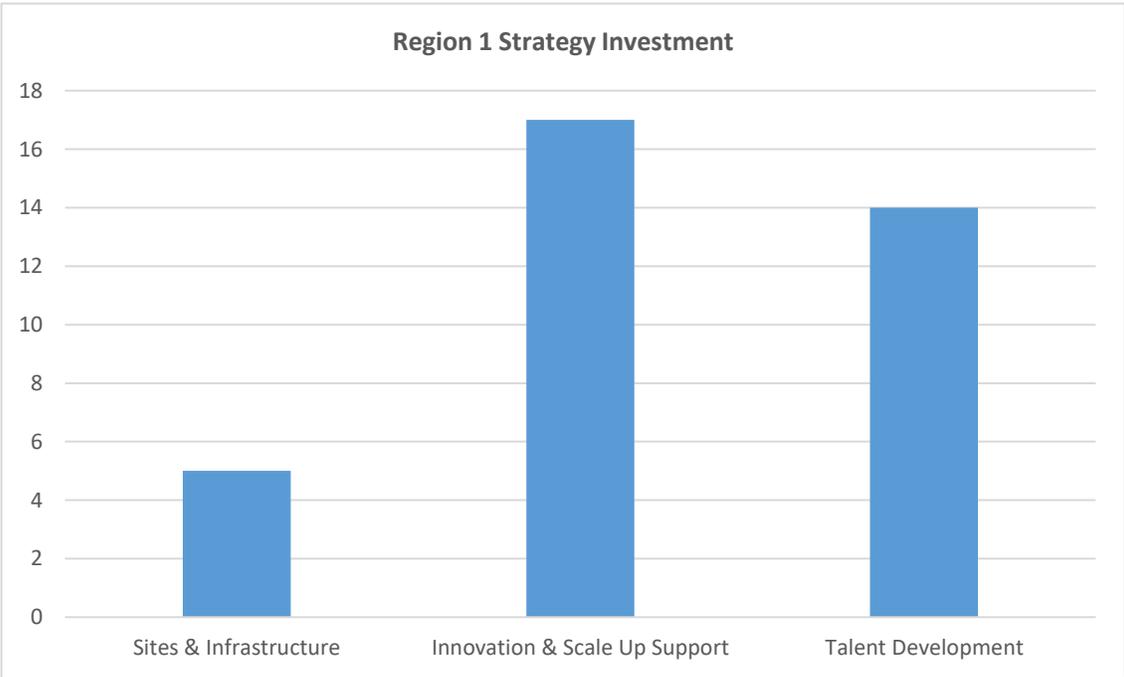
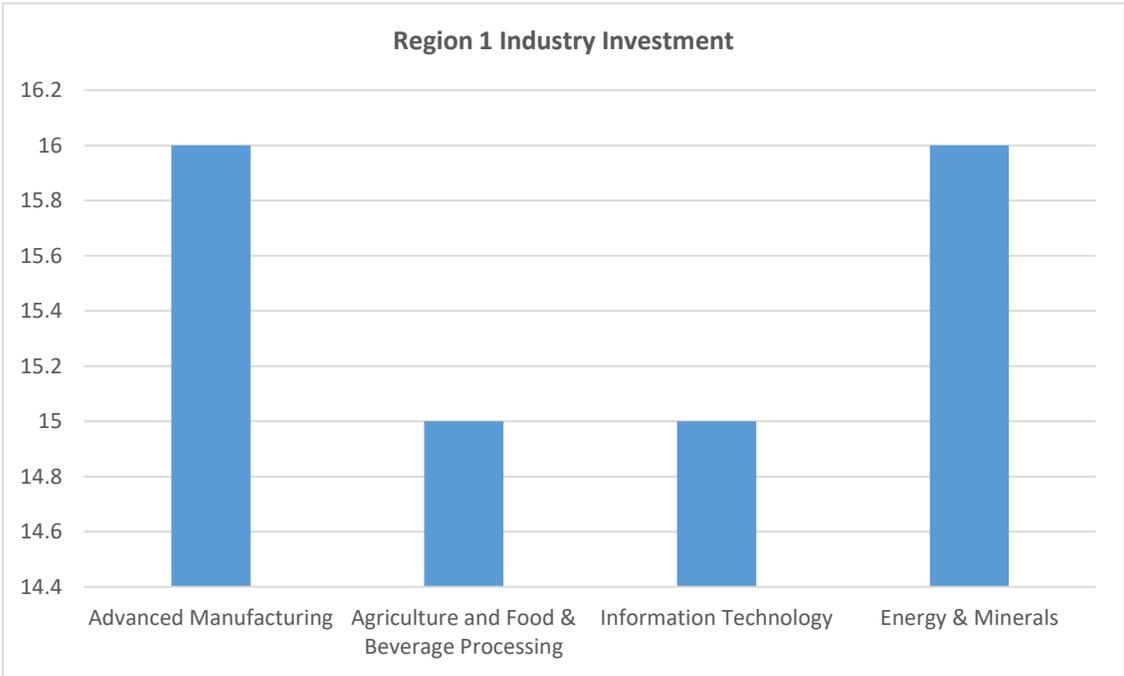
- Appalachian Council for Innovation
- Appalachian School of Law
- Appalachian Sustainable Development
- Appalachian Voices
- Blueridge Crossroads Small Business Development Center
- Bluefield University
- InvestSWVA
- Cumberland Industrial Facilities Authority (CIFA)
- Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission
- Emory & Henry College
- Friends of Southwest Virginia
- GENEDGE
- LENOWISCO Planning District Commission
- Lonesome Pine Regional Industrial Facilities Authority (Lonesome Pine RIFA)
- Mountain Empire Community College
- Mountain Empire Community College Small Business Development Center
- Mount Rogers Planning District Commission
- Mount Rogers Regional Partnership
- New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board
- Opportunity SWVA
- People Incorporated
- Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, Inc.
- Southwest Virginia Community College

- Southwest Virginia Community College Small Business Development Center
- Southwest Virginia Higher Education Center
- Southwest Virginia Workforce Development Board
- Tri-Cities Airport Authority
- University of Virginia’s College at Wise
- United Way of Southwest Virginia
- Virginia Coalfield Economic Development Authority
- Virginia Community Capital
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Virginia Department of Energy
- Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development
- Virginia Highlands Community College
- Virginia Highlands Community College Small Business Development Center
- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- Wytheville Community College

**V. OUTCOMES & IMPACT**

Since Fiscal Year 2018, the GO Virginia Region 1 Council has invested in 32 projects and has distributed \$8,359,303.19 in GO Virginia funds. Of the 32 projects, 17 have successfully closed and 15 remain active.





Region 1 Project Metrics (FY 2018 – Present)	
# of acres advanced to a higher VBRSP Tier	188 acres
Credentials Awarded	20
Students Trained	309
New Products Created	13
New Programs Implemented	3
Jobs Created	14
Business Assessments & Gap Analysis Completed	4
Business Workshops	48
Businesses Expanded	16
Businesses Engaged/Served	152
Businesses Participating in Study	103
Internships Completed	120
School Districts Engaged	16
Students Participating in Awareness Activities	4,656
Farmers Enrolled in Certifications	62
Farmers Trained	35
Farmers Reporting 10% Increase in Production	16
Farmers Upskilled	152
Market Analysis/Studies Completed	11
Organizations Successfully Formed	2

**VI. COMMUNICATION & OUTREACH**

The Seventh Annual Southwest Virginia Economic Forum took place on May 25, 2022 at the David J. Prior Convocation Center at The University of Virginia’s College at Wise. This was the first hybrid event, offering both virtual and in person participation. The theme for the day-long conference was *Building for the Future*. This annual event explored new ideas and innovations in new industry and emerging markets, workforce and childcare, and housing. This regional economic gathering is aimed at collaboration, innovation, and growth.



talent development,

One of the panels titled *Talent, Talent, & More Talent* provided insight into the nationwide workforce shortage, current workforce and regional trends and solutions. Panelist Dr. Julie Brown, Vice President of Advance Learning at the Institute for Advance Learning and Research in Danville, Virginia, highlighted the



Great Opportunities in Technology and Engineering Careers (GO TEC) program. She shared the importance of exposing students to career pathways at an early age; GO TEC begins working with middle school students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade. These Career Connection Labs are being implemented in four middle schools in Region 1; these include Carroll County Middle School, Grayson County Middle School and two middle schools in Wythe County. These students will have a direct line of sight to careers and credentialing through Wytheville Community College.

Overall, the participation and exposure of the first hybrid Southwest Virginia Economic Forum was a success.

Seventh Annual SWVA Economic Forum Outreach Statistics	
Virtual Registrants	70
In Person Registrants	279
Promotional & Post Event News Outlets Coverage	17
Website Views (05/19/22 – 05/26/22)	906
UVA Wise Facebook Page (average reach per post)	2,108
SWVA Economic Forum Facebook Page (average reach per post)	1,868
UVA Wise LinkedIn Page (total unique impressions)	3,775

Region 1 staff continues to utilize [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), Constant Contact, and the [website](#) to disseminate information to regional partners.

Outreach Statistics	
Facebook followers	534
LinkedIn followers	174
Constant Contact subscribers	503
GO VA Region 1 Website unique visitors (07/01/21 - 06/30/22)	811

**VII. PROJECT PIPELINE**

Region 1 staff is working with several applicants on projects that are anticipated to be submitted on the December 2, 2022 deadline or in the 2023 calendar year. There are three projects currently in the pipeline that include an Enhanced Capacity Building sites project (\$100,000), a Per Capita talent development request (\$400,000), and a Per Capita talent pathways project to expand GO TEC Career Connection Labs in an additional four or more middle schools in Region 1 (\$350,000).

**VIII. COUNCIL MEMBERS**

As of October 2022, the Region 1 Council has 20 members. The Regional Council is comprised of leaders across many sectors of the economic development and workforce development landscape, with the majority of the council mandated to be private business leaders.

GO Virginia Region 1 Council Members		
Name	Organization	Email
Moir Beamer	CEO, Virginia Produce Company	<a href="mailto:moir@vaproduce.com">moir@vaproduce.com</a>
Sam Cassell	Plant Manager, Utility Trailer-Glade Spring, VA	<a href="mailto:Sam.Cassell@utm.com">Sam.Cassell@utm.com</a>
Lois Clarke	President, CIO, & Treasurer, The United Company	<a href="mailto:lclarke@unitedco.net">lclarke@unitedco.net</a>
Pamela Collie-Price	Talent Acquisition Manager, EarthLink	<a href="mailto:pamela.collie-price@elink.net">pamela.collie-price@elink.net</a>
Blake Edwards	President & CEO, Skyline National Bank	<a href="mailto:bedwards@skylinenationalbank.com">bedwards@skylinenationalbank.com</a>
Richard Edwards	Clerk, Dickenson County Circuit Court	<a href="mailto:rwedwards@vacourts.gov">rwedwards@vacourts.gov</a>
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Beth Rhinehart, Chair	President & CEO, Bristol Chamber of Commerce	<a href="mailto:brhinehart@bristolchamber.org">brhinehart@bristolchamber.org</a>

Dean Sprinkle	President, Wytheville Community College	<a href="mailto:dsprinkle@wcc.vccs.edu">dsprinkle@wcc.vccs.edu</a>
Travis Staton	President & CEO, United Way of Southwest Virginia	<a href="mailto:tstaton@unitedwayswva.org">tstaton@unitedwayswva.org</a>
Scotty Wampler	Executive Director, Cumberland Plateau Planning District Commission	<a href="mailto:swampler@cppdc.org">swampler@cppdc.org</a>
Browning Wynn, II	Senior Vice President & Market Executive, Powell Valley National Bank	<a href="mailto:bwynn@powellvalleybank.com">bwynn@powellvalleybank.com</a>

**IX. SUPPORT ORGANIZATION**

UVA Wise staff that support the GO Virginia Region 1 efforts include Kalen Hunter, Director of Economic Development & GO Virginia Region 1; Tommy Asher, Program Manager; Robyn Lee, Program Manager for Finance & Grants; and Shannon Blevins, Vice Chancellor of Administration, Government Relations, & Strategic Initiatives.

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